

FWIS 170: "What is Citizenship?"

Spring 2022
MWF, 9 - 9:50
HUMA 227

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Office hours: email for Zoom meeting

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Course Description

The concept of "citizenship" depends on and helps structure formations of society and community.

But in our current moment, the quality and effectiveness of social discourse is disintegrating as quickly as our connections to one another expand.

So, there may be no greater imperative than to yoke practices of effective communication with the theories, histories, and cultural productions that constitute and contend with notions of "citizenship."

In our readings of short fiction, poems, and films, this seminar takes a broad approach to the questions, contexts, iconographies, and material domains of "citizenship."

Given that the primary FWIS objective is to strengthen the ability to speak, write, and present effectively, communication as a literary theme will also shape course content.

In our readings, we will attend to notions of effective communication as the basis of and the vehicle for interrogating the meanings of citizenship.



Course Objectives

- understand the importance of effective communication and analysis across disciplines
- develop rhetorical awareness and compose strong arguments
- become confident and adept at reading, analyzing, discussing, and writing about literature, culture, and history
- practice engaging secondary sources and incorporating specific citation conventions
- participate in intellectual dialogue through in-class discussion and formal presentations
- collaborate effectively in peer writing groups
- understand and adapt to audience expectations and codes of genre
- gain acquaintance with literary tropes of citizenship and communication

Course Materials

Students will need to purchase the following texts (which will not be available through the Rice bookstore):

- Claudia Rankine, *Citizen: An American Lyric* (2014)
- Sylvain Neuvel, *The Test* (2019)



Class Policies

Attendance

Students who miss more than three class sessions will lose points on "class citizenship." Students who miss two or fewer sessions will receive a grade letter bump on the assignment of their choice.

Readings

Most of our texts are downloadable from the class Canvas. Please always print out and bring hard copies to class.

Late Work and Extensions

If you are impeded by sickness, family illness, or athletic commitment, please be ready to provide documentation to negotiate an extension.

If an emergency arises, please contact me. I will discuss options on a case-by-case basis in good faith.

Honor Code

Refer to the Honor System Handbook if you have any questions about the university's standards for academic integrity: honor.rice.edu.

Disability & Accommodations

If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodation, please speak with me during the first two weeks of class.

You will also need to be in contact with Disability Support Services (DSS) in the Allen Center (Room 111). Refer to dss.rice.edu for more information.

Course Grading Scale

- A 94-100%
- A- 90-93%



Class Policies

Paper Formatting

For written assignments, I ask you to format the page in a specific way. Not because it's the "right way," but to emphasize the importance of formatting practices, generally.

- 1" margins
- 12 pt. Times New Roman
- Surname and page number in the top right corner of each page

Class Assignments

To pass the course, students must complete all assignments and components by their respective due dates.

"Classroom Citizenship" (20%)

Successful "classroom citizens" will prioritize attendance, attentiveness, diligence, preparedness, and professional courtesy.

The goal is to develop and practice productive social, intellectual, and organizational habits that will build confidence and ensure success at Rice and beyond.

As part of this grade, students must complete reading assignments before class and come ready to discuss those readings with the instructor and one another.

Lead a Class Discussion (10%)

Students will initiate one class discussion with a five-minute presentation about the primary reading for that day (e.g. Jackson's "The Lottery"). These presentations will offer a focused reading of the text -- pointing us to something that is not obvious on an initial reading -- and ask questions that generate class discussion.



Class Assignments

Weekly Writing (10%)

This is a catchall category for all the smaller pieces of writing we'll do throughout the semester, starting with the Diagnostic Essay in week 2.

Personal Statement (10%)

With the aim of drafting something you might one day revise for an application to graduate school, an internship, or a grant, etc., this 3-page essay asks you to think about how notions of citizenship and communication have impacted your senses of self and purpose. How have these concepts shaped who you are, who you want to become, and/or your desire to improve the world?

Close Reading (10%)

This shorter paper (500-600 words) will be more analytical than argumentative. Rather than defend a thesis, this essay requires close attention to specific language, syntax, and patterns in a given text.

Focusing on a brief passage of your choosing, the successful close reading will unpack the language of that short passage to help the reader better understand and appreciate the larger text of which it is part.

Students can use the close reading paper to build into the Argumentative Essay.

Writing Groups / Peer Readership Reports (10%)

Done well, writing groups help students better identify strengths and weaknesses, sharpen their thinking, and implement constructive feedback.

Meeting twice during the semester in groups of 3-4, students will read and discuss the work of their peers and provide both their writing-mates and the instructor a peer readership report.



Class Assignments

Argumentative Essay (20%)

The 6-7 page argumentative essay will be the seminar capstone paper, and will require several components, each of which will be part of the assignment grade, including: a proposal, a CAPC visit, a plan for revision, and an abstract.

The primary goal of a process-oriented pedagogy is for you to get to know yourselves and improve as writers. The secondary goal is for you to craft and refine a specific piece of writing.

Class Symposium (10%)

In the semester's final week, we will have a class symposium wherein all students will read a revised version of their argumentative paper. In preparation, students will circulate a 250-word abstract to instructor and peers. Attendance is mandatory for all three days.

Course Calendar

Note: I reserve the right to alter the syllabus at any time, but I will always try to ensure changes benefit students.

DATE	READING(S)	ASSIGNMENT(S) DUE
Week 1: WELCOME (Jan 10 - 14)		
M. Jan 10	Intro to course	---
W. Jan 12	Hughes, "Let America be America"	---
F. Jan 14	King, "I Have a Dream..."	Canvas Intros
Week 2: DREAMS (Jan 17 - 21)		
M. Jan 17	<i>No Class: MLK Day</i>	---
W. Jan 19	Villavicencio, "Waking Up from the American Dream"	---
F. Jan 21	Saunders, "The Semplica-Girl Diaries"	Diagnostic Essay
Week 3: DREAMS (Jan 24 - 28)		
M. Jan 24	Eugenides, "Great Experiment"	---
W. Jan 26	DuBois, "The Comet"	---
F. Jan 28	Personal Statement advice (UConn & Purdue)	PS: draft
Week 4: ALIEN-NATION (Jan 31 - Feb 4)		
M. Jan 31	<i>No Class (Writing Groups - Personal Statement)</i>	---
W. Feb 2	Jen, "In the American Society"	---
F. Feb 4	Far, "Mrs. Spring Fragrance"	PS: final

DATE	READING(S)	ASSIGNMENT(S) DUE
	Week 5: ALIEN-NATION (Feb 7 - 11)	
M. Feb 7	Roanhorse, "Welcome to Your Authentic Indian Experience™"	---
W. Feb 9	<i>Hidden Figures</i>	Weekly Writing
F. Feb 11	<i>No Class: Spring Recess</i>	---
	Week 6: EQUALITY (Feb 14 - 18)	
M. Feb 14	Vonnegut, "Harrison Bergerson"	---
W. Feb 16	Ellison, "Repent, Harlequin! Said the Ticktockman"	Weekly Writing
F. Feb 18	<i>Twilight Zone</i> , "The Eye of the Beholder"	---
	Week 7: EQUALITY (Feb 21 - 25)	
M. Feb 21	Schanoes, "Phosphorus"	---
W. Feb 23	Adjei-Brenyah, "The Era"	---
F. Feb 25	Asimov, "Strikebreaker"	CR: proposal
	Week 8: COMMUNITY (Feb 28 - Mar 4)	
M. Feb 28	<i>No Class (Midterm Recess)</i>	---
W. Mar 2	Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"	---
F. Mar 4	<i>Twilight Zone</i> , "The Monsters are Due on Maple Street"	CR: full draft
	Week 9: COMMUNITY (Mar 7 - 11)	
M. Mar 7	<i>No Class (CAPC - Close Reading)</i>	---
W. Mar 9	Jackson, "The Lottery"	---
F. Mar 11	S. King, "Home Delivery"	CR: revised & CAPC form
	Week 10: Rest! (Mar 14 - 18)	
M. Mar 14	<i>No class: Spring Break</i>	---
W. Mar 16	<i>No class: Spring Break</i>	---
F. Mar 18	<i>No class: Spring Break</i>	---
	Week 11: (SELF) KNOWLEDGE (Mar 21 - 25)	
M. Mar 21	<i>The Test</i>	AE: proposal
W. Mar 23	<i>The Test</i>	---
F. Mar 25	<i>The Test</i>	---

DATE	READING(S)	ASSIGNMENT(S) DUE
Week 12: (SELF) GOVERNANCE (Mar 28 - Apr 1)		
M. Mar 28	Evans, "Boys Go to Jupiter"	---
W. Mar 30	Sayles, "At the Anarchists' Convention"	AE: 4p draft
F. Apr 1	<i>No Class (CAPC - Argumentative Essay)</i>	---
Week 13: (SELF) GOVERNANCE (Apr 4 - 8)		
M. Apr 4	Baldwin, "In Search of a Majority"	---
W. Apr 6	Henry, "Cosmopolite in a Cafe"	AE: full draft / CAPC notes
F. Apr 8	<i>No Class (Writing Groups - Argumentative Essay)</i>	---
Week 14: IDENTITY (Apr 11 - 15)		
M. Apr 11	<i>Citizen</i>	---
W. Apr 13	<i>Citizen</i>	---
F. Apr 15	<i>Citizen</i>	AE: final (revised)
Week 15: Symposium! (Apr 18 - 22)		
M. Apr 18	Symposium	---
W. Apr 20	Symposium	---
F. Apr 22	Symposium	---